



**\*A Strategic Spot  
for Gathering  
Information**

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# **The Listening Post \***

## **Kentucky Talking Book Library**

*Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives  
Serving Kentucky's Need to Know*

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### **KTBL Celebrates 35 Years**

This year the Kentucky Talking Book Library is celebrating 35 years of serving patrons who are unable to read traditional printed materials. In the days before our library, Kentuckians received service from The Cincinnati Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Patrons appreciated the service, but it took 3-4 weeks to get books.

Under the administration of Governor Louie B. Nunn, the Kentucky Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opened its doors on April 1, 1969. The first location was at 150 Clinton Street in a 10,000 square- foot warehouse that had been condemned by city building inspectors. (We can only assume there was some renovation done first.)

Frances C. Coleman was the first Regional Librarian. She and her staff of six supplied Braille and talking books (which were then records) to 1,700 readers throughout Kentucky. They began with a collection of 4,000 books provided by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), and record players were distributed to patrons by the Kentucky Industries for the Blind. Kentucky patrons could receive new book selections in one week, as opposed to three.

The 1970's brought several changes to the Library. Dena Wilson assumed the duties of Regional Librarian on April 1, 1974. Under her tenure the Library was assigned a toll-free telephone number so our patrons could call us at no charge. Needless to say, we received a limited number of calls when patrons were charged long distance fees. After the installation of the toll-free line we had over 8,000 patron calls. We still use this same number today.

Perhaps the biggest change of the seventies was the National Library Service's decision to concentrate on cassette books instead of records. This was a gradual process. For example in 1975 we circulated over 90,000 books

and magazines on record, but only about 10,000 on cassette. In 1974 there were only 63 readers using cassette players, but by the middle of 1975 there were 860. Records weren't completely phased out until 2000, when the last few magazines made the change to cassette.

Another significant change was the addition of 2 recording booths in 1977. These were purchased in order to record books of local interest that were not available through NLS, such as books about Kentucky and books by Kentucky authors. The first book recorded was Darkness at Dawn by Harry M. Caudill, narrated by Dorothy Wigginton. The goal was to produce 5-10 books that first year, but it was surpassed when 15 books were actually recorded. Over the years 89 volunteers have narrated, proofread, and monitored roughly 1400 books.

Because a high percentage of the Library's patrons lived in Louisville and Jefferson County, the Louisville Subregional Library was opened in 1977 to better serve them. By the end of their first year they had registered 763 patrons, circulated 26,000 books, and welcomed nearly 1,500 walk-in patrons.

Events that occurred in 1976 were the move to a larger facility on Twilight Trail and the appointment of a new director, Adam Ruschival, who was a library patron, as well as a staff member. Governor Julian Carroll proclaimed September 10-16, 1978 to be Talking Book Library Week.

The library continued to grow during the 1980's. In 1981 the Northern Kentucky Subregional Library opened in the Kenton County Library in Covington with 335 patrons. It was created to serve patrons in Boone, Campbell, Carroll, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, Owen, and Pendleton Counties.

Our current location within the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, on Coffee Tree Road, was officially dedicated on October 8, 1982. Our office was actually moved during February and March of that year. Staff members moved all the office furniture, the recording booths, the book collection, and everything else—all while continuing to serve patrons. Some of our current staff was involved in that move, and they are glad we have stayed put for the last 22 years.

Under the direction of Richard Feindel, the current Regional Librarian, our Frankfort library installed the first computer system in 1985. It is called READS (Reader Enrollment and Delivery Service) and it was developed by NLS especially for Talking Book Libraries. This automated system keeps track of patron information and the book collection. Each morning it finds who is due for service; it selects books from request lists, checks them out, and prints the mail cards for them. Productivity was increased; fourteen staff members could do what it took eighteen to do manually. Those of us who have only used READS cannot imagine working with a manual system. The Louisville library was automated in 1985 and Covington in 1992.

The newsletter was officially named The Listening Post. We now try to publish two newsletters per year. Our Descriptive Video collection was begun in 1996. These are VHS movies that have additional narration for those who cannot see the action onscreen. This program is funded entirely by patron donations and our collection has grown to include over 300 movies.

Throughout our history we have strived to serve you, our patrons, to the best of our ability. We currently have a staff of 10 serving nearly 3700 readers. Patrons range in age from 2 to 106, and so far this year each has read anywhere from a single book to 633. Last year our library circulated 129,764 cassette books; 2,822 Braille books; 1,142 descriptive videos; and 1,108 cassette players. Despite budget cuts, changes in technology and staff, and anything else that comes our way, we look forward to expanding and improving our service in the future.

## **You're Invited!**

**The Kentucky Talking Book Library is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!**

**Please plan to join us for an open house on  
Tuesday, September 14, 2004, 1:00 - 5:30 p.m.**

**In the office of the Talking Book Library, 300 Coffee Tree Road, Frankfort, KY**

**Come meet your librarian and the rest of the staff, the State Librarian and Commissioner, other patrons, volunteer narrators and authors of Kentucky books, local and state officials.**

## **Regional Librarian to Retire**

Well, the shock is beginning to wear off and reality is setting in. After almost 28 years of service, over half as Regional Librarian, Richard Feindel is retiring. Richard started with our library as a reader's advisor in 1977 and was promoted to Institution Services Consultant soon after. He became Regional Librarian upon the departure of Adam Ruschival in the mid-1980's.

Richard has seen more employees than he can count make their way through this office, not to mention the number of patrons we serve. He oversaw the testing of the READS systems, the change-over from records to cassettes, the overall growth of our service, the openings of two sub-regional libraries, and the move to our current location. The knowledge he has stored in his brain has us scrambling to take notes almost every time he starts a task. To say he will be missed is an understatement.

Richard and his wife, Ruth, plan a trip to Austria in the fall and Richard's only other immediate plans are to spend time with his cats (Jake, Nessa, and Ernie) and to do some volunteer environmental work. Please help us wish Richard the very best of luck.

## Long-Term Patrons

We looked through our records and found that 236 of our readers have been patrons of the Talking Book Library for 20 years or more. There are 37 patrons who have been with us for 25 years or more. Eight long-time friends have been reading talking books for 30 years or more. Some patrons have been readers for so long we no longer have any documentation for when they began.

We would like to hear from all you long-timers. If you have any stories, reminiscences, or comments about your own history with talking books, by all means share them with us. Call us at 1-800-372-2968 or write us at PO Box 818, Frankfort KY 40602.

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## Future Plans

Many of you have asked when the audio books in our collections will be converted to digital format. The National Library Service/Library of Congress (NLS) has been studying the need to change to another format for audio materials for several years, and is continuing to study this matter. At this time, NLS is hoping to make a change in format by FY 2008.

Beginning this year, NLS is producing all new audio book titles in digital format and plans to have 10,000 existing analog titles into digital format by 2008 and continue to produce an average of 2,000 per year in future years.

At this time, NLS has concluded that a flash memory-based system is the best media for use in the LBPH

program if the price continues to decline to where it is economically feasible. NLS does still plan to record all titles using the human voice.

Cassette books and players will continue to be the backbone of the system through approximately 2007, but in the five years between FY 2007 and FY 2012, digital books and players will be phased in to replace cassette books and players.

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## Donations

The donations we have received over the years have made a tremendous difference in our library service program. Some of our most recent purchases include videos for our Descriptive Video Collection and incentives for our younger patrons participating in our summer reading program. Thanks to everyone for your generosity.

Jean Muscovitz in memory of  
Eva Carney Heathman  
K G and Wanda Reed  
Thelma and Jim Caudill  
Irene Hall and Nannalee Perry  
Rodney, Lois and Susan Miller  
Ruth E Wood  
Julia and Jowain Stone  
Mary Ann Boss  
Martha Meyer  
Marjorie Osterdahl  
Elizabeth M Wagner  
Ruth Ann Fain  
David and Nancy Bell  
Fred S Porter  
William and Carolyn Hendrix  
Anne E Kirkpatrick

If you would like to contribute to KTBL, please make your check or money order payable to the Kentucky Talking Book Library, 300 Coffee Tree Road, PO Box 818, Frankfort KY 40602-0818. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH THROUGH THE MAIL. Donations are 100% tax deductible and appreciated by the patrons who use our service.

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### Dates to Remember

The Talking Book Library will be closed on the following days:

July 5: Independence Day  
September 6: Labor Day  
October 21: Staff Development Day  
November 2: Election Day  
November 11: Veterans Day  
November 25 & 26: Thanksgiving  
December 25 & 27: Christmas  
December 31, 2004 & January 3, 2005: New Year's Day

The Talking Book Library holds a staff meeting for about an hour and a half once a month and the phones are transferred to voice mail. The Library will be closed all day October 21 for Staff Development Day (in-house training), and all day November 2 for the presidential election. If you call at any of those times, you will get a recorded greeting. Please leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. The voice mail will also be used for ½ day on September 14 for the KTBL Anniversary Open House.

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### Looking for Something to Read?

If you're looking for something to read, here are some suggestions from our staff:

RC 50061 Cannery Row by John Steinbeck (Barbara's pick)  
RC 55714 The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald (Richard's pick)  
RC 21558 The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath (Barbara's pick)  
KY 01861 Around Our House by Janice Holt Giles (Chris's pick)  
RC 47310 The Hours by Michael Cunningham (Richard's pick)  
RC 34820 Truman by David McCullough (Wendy's pick)  
RC 55748 Devil in the White City by Erik Larson (Wendy's pick)  
KY 02357 Questionable Remains & KY 02356 Rumor of Bones the Lindsey Chamberlain mysteries (Chris's picks)

Contact your librarian if you would like to receive any of these books.

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### Attention Knitters

News for all our yarn-loving patrons:

#### Copper Dots

Copper Dots, in Chandler, Arizona, has craft books for knitters, crocheters and other crafty folk, as well as a large selection of cookbooks. To get a list of what's available, e-mail Copper Dots at [marnott@extremezone.com](mailto:marnott@extremezone.com).

### Knitting Without Tears

The volunteer Brailleists and Tactists in Madison, Wisconsin, have this book and many other craft books available for loan or purchase. Their library contains over 2,000 titles and they will send books anywhere in the United States and Canada. Their web address is [www.vbti.org](http://www.vbti.org).

### VIP-Sheep-Talk

VIP-SHEEP-TALK is a list for blind and visually impaired persons who enjoy yarn-related crafts (knitting, crochet and other crafts.) This is the group to join if you want to share patterns, get the scoop on yarns and supplies, and get help on one of those difficult-to-learn patterns or stitches. To subscribe, send a blank e-mail message to [VIP-SHEEP-TALK-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:VIP-SHEEP-TALK-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

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### Resources for People with Diabetes

The National Federation for the Blind has a Diabetics Division which serves as a support and information network serving blind and sighted diabetics, their families and health care professionals. It publishes up-to-date lists of suppliers of aids and appliances and a Diabetic Food Exchange list that are available in Braille or on cassette.

They also publish the *Voice of the Diabetic* which is a free quarterly news magazine containing articles by diabetics and health professionals, reviews of the latest adaptive equipment and research findings, medical questions answered by an

insulin-dependent physician, and an extensive resource list. A subscription to *Voice of the Diabetic* is free. Contact *Voice of the Diabetic* or the National Federation for the Blind at 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, MD 21230 or telephone (314) 875-8911. Web site: <http://www.nfb.org/diabetes.htm>.

The American Diabetes Association maintains an excellent web site with information about diabetes: <http://www.diabetes.org>.

Check with your librarian for more information and books of interest on this subject.

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### FYI: Braille Calendars and Cards

Although the season is past, here is a handy list of vendors for large-print and Braille calendars and cards for holidays and special occasions for the coming year. Contact the American Printing House for the Blind for calendars of various sizes in both formats. Phone (800) 223-1839 or e-mail: [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org). Braille holiday cards are available from the Blind Children's Fund. Phone (989) 779-9966. E-mail [222.blindchildrensfund.org](mailto:222.blindchildrensfund.org). A free Braille calendar for blind or visually impaired people can be obtained from the Braille Institute Phone: (800) BRAILLE (272-4553), or e-mail: [www.brailleinstitute.org](http://www.brailleinstitute.org). Creative Adaptations for Learning (CAL) offers a variety of special occasion cards. Phone: (516) 466-9143. E-mail: [www.cals.org](http://www.cals.org). Print-and-Braille holiday cards are available from the

Hadley School for the Blind, phone:  
(800) 323-4238, or e-mail:  
[www.braille.com](http://www.braille.com).

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### Something to Think About

Listed below are the average dollar values of some of your NLS-furnished items. Please remember that all of these items are the property of the National Library Service and only on loan for your use.

Cassette book machine \$264.00  
Cassette E-Z book machine \$160.20  
Headphones \$22.00  
Cassette books (per copy) \$5.27  
Braille books (per copy) \$97.38  
Print/Braille \$24.33  
DVS (per title) \$24.95

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**Babies!!**

Congratulations to Paula, our magazine clerk, and her husband, Billy. They are the proud grandparents of a handsome grandson, Christian. Christian was born on November 3, 2003. Although he lives in Tennessee, Paula spends as much time as she can visiting and spoiling little Christian.

We also congratulate Caroline, our circulation clerk, and her husband, Larry on the arrival of "D.J.". "D.J." made his debut on November 17, 2003. It's been quite a while since we've had a new baby in

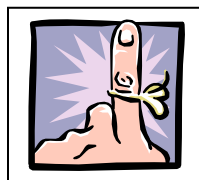
KTBL and we all enjoy having "D.J." visit our office.

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### Attention Reader's Digest and Newsweek Readers

You may receive a letter from the American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. soon. The letter is requesting donations from readers who get Reader's Digest and Newsweek magazines. This is just a request and a donation is NOT required for you to continue receiving the magazines. However, you MUST return the letter to the Printing House to continue your subscription.

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### Things to Remember

- Our KTBL toll-free phone number is 1-800-372-2968. Our local phone number is 502-564-8300, ext. 276.
- Descriptive videos are on loan to you for two weeks. If you need to keep the movie longer, call Greta, ext. 279.
- Please take extra care of our DVS movies. We only have only one copy of each movie and replacements are quite expensive and not always available.
- Please rewind your movie before sending it back to us.
- If you are interested in receiving descriptive videos, please contact Greta, ext. 279.

- Please make sure your name and address are on ALL correspondence. This is especially important for request lists, particularly Braille requests. We hate to throw away a list because we don't know who it is from.
- When you finish reading a book, please return it. Do not loan it to anyone else. By doing this you will ensure that books are on the way to you promptly and you will not find yourself without books.
- When you call the Library and are connected to voice mail, leave a complete message. Please speak slowly and include your name (spelling the last name) and phone number. Please do not leave lengthy request lists on the voice mail. We will return your call as soon as possible.
- Please keep all food and drink away from your cassette player. Dirt and liquid can damage the electronic components inside cassette players. Use an all-purpose cleaner and a soft cloth to clean the outside of your player.
- If a tape is damaged, place a rubber band around the damaged cassette and put an "X" on the mail card. Do not put string or rubber bands around the plastic mailing containers as they get caught in postal equipment.
- Call us when you are temporarily suspending or canceling your service; if you have a change of address or phone number; when you get too many books or not enough; if you don't receive requested titles; or if you need to start, change or stop magazine subscriptions.
- If you have a problem with any of our equipment, call us before you return it for repair. If you do return a piece of equipment for repair, please put a note inside the box with your name, address, phone number, and a brief description of the problem you are having. Do NOT put notes inside the cassette mailing containers.
- If you put a tape in your player and it does not work, try rewinding the tape. It may just be at the end and the previous patron did not rewind when they finished the book. Also check that the side-selector switch is in the correct position.
- If a tape speed sounds too fast, and the speed selector switch is in the correct position, remove the tape and tap it on the table top. Then try playing it again.
- Refusal to accept any library-related mail will result in the interruption of your regular library service. Refused mail results in automatic suspension from our mailing lists.

